



Testimony of John Malfettone, Chairman
UConn Strong

on

H.B. No. 6659 AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM
ENDING JUNE 30, 2025, AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR. (Higher
Education Agencies)

Before the Appropriations Committee
February 15, 2023

Chairperson Osten, Chairperson Walker and members of the Appropriations Committee, my name is John Malfettone and I am the Chairman of UConn Strong, an independent non-profit organization founded in 2018 to promote the connection between excellence at the University of Connecticut and its impact on the state of Connecticut. The growth and sustainability of Connecticut's economy as well as the vibrancy of our state's culture are both stronger with better prepared Huskies graduating. Prior to my current role, I served as Chairperson for the UConn Foundation and spent ten years as a member of the Foundation Board. I graduated from UConn with a BS degree in Accounting, met my wife there, my best friends are UConn alums, and I have worked in Connecticut for most of my life. I owe all I have to the University of Connecticut and bleed blue every time I nick myself with a razor blade.

I am here today to testify in support of restoring the UConn and UConn Health Center budgets to their requested allotments.

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On behalf of UConn Strong, we would like to associate ourselves with the remarks of both President Radenka Maric and UCHC CEO Dr. Bruce Liang.

As an organization committed to ensuring the continuation of UConn's positive contribution to the state's economy, we are focusing our comments on a few key issues, which we believe are essential to keep UConn and UCHC competitive as an economic engine for Connecticut in bringing entrepreneurship and research funding to this great state.

If enacted as proposed, the governor's budget would leave the university (both UConn and UConn Health) with a shortfall of \$159.6 million next year and \$197.1 million the following year compared to their budget request. Given that the UConn & UCH budget requests were only meant to maintain the status quo, plus the increased costs mandated by the state, it is incumbent on the state of Connecticut to fund those commitments.

UConn is a dynamic engine that makes Connecticut better.

- 69% percent of UConn graduates are employed in Connecticut six months after graduation with an average salary of \$59,900.
- Major employers like Aetna, Ernst & Young, Electric Boat, Pratt & Whitney, PWC, and KPMG clamor for UConn graduates.
- The 71 companies in UConn's technology incubator have created 516 jobs and raised \$183 million in FY22; since 2003, UConn supported startup companies have raised \$1.14 billion and 70% of companies that graduated from the UConn incubator program have stayed in Connecticut
- UConn filed 91 invention disclosures and 25 patents were issued in 2022
- More than 50% of all engineers in CT are UConn graduates, 60% of the dentists and 35% of the physicians were educated or have ties to UConn Health

As a long-time UConn supporter, I have also heard the naysayers and I am very happy that the state of Connecticut and the legislature have ignored those calls. Without evidence, critics have complained about bloated administrative budgets and non-academic staff wasting money. The fact is, however, that UConn has kept those numbers down while increasing academic achievement and growing significantly. Administrators make up just 2.3% of total employees. Given the mission, that is a tremendous achievement.

Finally, as the former chair of the UConn Foundation, I do not believe it is an accident or a coincidence that the UConn Foundation continues to set institutional records for fundraising at a time when excellence at UConn soars. Count myself among those who have invested heavily in the University, in both time and financial resources, because we believe, not only in the mission, but also in the trajectory. Devastating cuts such as these create a spiral affect, which impacts not only current programs and services, but also future fundraising efforts.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I look forward to working with you on this and other matters in this session and beyond.